FAMILY LIFE

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COUNSELING IN "TRIANGLES"

by MARY JANE HUNGERFORD, PH.D.

What produces the "other man" or "other woman" situation, the so-called "triangle"? It is my opinion that there cannot be an OM or OW unless there is already distance between husband and wife. The important question to answer is why does this distance exist? Has it always existed? Was the marital relationship sound in the beginning? What caused the rift?

It should be pointed out that infidelity or even the possibility of an OM or OW is not always the problem presented by the client, though this may be the thing most on his or her mind. To make it even more difficult for the counselor, the client who suggests the possibility of the spouse's being involved with someone else may himself (herself) be the one who is so involved. Not infrequently both husband and wife have extramarital involvements.

It is important to recognize that these involvements are but symptoms. The real problem has to be uncovered. There are many types of difficulty existing between husband and wife which lead to infidelity—emotional or sexual, or both. But I am convinced that in most cases there is a temperamental predisposition in one or both of the marital partners which tends toward this particular behavior.

A wife may be cold, demanding, critical, extravagant, a poor housekeeper, or so wrapped up in child rearing as to be seldom available as an adult companion, unwilling to keep herself adequately groomed or in some other way unsatisfactory as a partner. A husband may define his role strictly as the bread winner, may immerse himself in his work, driving himself to earn more and more while participating little in couple and family affairs. He may be critical of his wife's homemaking, money handling, and child rearing. These, admittedly, are details. To broaden the perspective, it is my impression that considerable evidence of immaturity is apt to be present, including self-centeredness and excessive need for attention in the man or woman whose frustration is expressed in seeking solace with an OM or OW.

In addition, two traits which have appeared consistently in each individual whom I have counseled who was involved in an extramarital affair, are

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deep feelings of inferiority, and of hostility toward the other sex. The Johnson Temperament Analysis is a useful tool in helping the wanderer to understand his (or her) own tendencies which led to the affair. Further, it can be used to introduce him to an awareness of his own needs as well as to the possibility of reducing the more neurotic ones and discovering less damaging and more effective means of satisfying the relatively normal ones.

The man who becomes involved with another woman may be naive and feel that his inamorata appreciates him in a way that his wife does not. He may fail to realize that he is unconsciously putting his best foot forward with the OW while relaxing at home or even releasing his hostility toward his mother or some other female figure in his early life against whom he has deeply repressed grievances. He may choose someone considerably inferior to his wife in an unconscious attempt to make himself feel superior without effort.

There are a number of specific things which a counselor can initiate which will help to produce insight and growth in the client. First, helping him to face his feelings of inferiority, to discover where they came from and then to begin efforts to build ego strength in a more effective way. The JTA will perhaps show a high critical score and the counseling sheet on this is a good beginning. The Johnson Attitude Inquiry is useful in bringing out early experiences which contributed to a lack of a feeling of self worth. Guidance in discovering channels of functioning, usually non-remunerative, through which the client can actually do something valuable for the family, the community, his profession or the world must be instigated. Each client will have talents, sometimes undiscovered or undeveloped which he can be encouraged to use. There are no short cuts to feelings of self worth. Achieving them requires sustained effort.

If the Self-Mastery score on the JTA is low it may be necessary to work in this area with the aid of the counseling sheets. Substantial improvements are not likely to be made unless there is some capacity to stick to a project. If high subjectivitiy is shown, work on this will help the client to recognize his prejudices which are blocking communication. These often include rigid role concepts which may lead to failure of the wife to please her husband in spite of her most strenuous efforts to do so and vice versa.

It can also be shown that using the OW or OM for ego enhancement is self-defeating because it produces feelings of guilt and shame which counterbalance to a considerable extent the benefits of being admired and shown attention. This is a far more effective place for the counselor to put the emphasis than upon the client's love for his children and the negative effects of an affair on them, directly or indirectly. The client is apt to be already anxious and defensive about this even to the extent of refusing to recognize the children's awareness of the situation.

Encouraging the client to have a good look at the spouse is also helpful. The JTA criss-cross is needed for this. Frequently there will be a distortion of the spouse's profile in several traits. It can be pointed out to the client that a distortion for the worse usually indicates hidden resentment, an over-reaction. This over-reaction sometimes comes from unhappy experiences with someone other than the spouse. An earlier romantic attachment may be uncovered and aired, though this is seldom the whole basis for the trouble. Hostility toward the opposite sex often goes back a long way to experiences in childhood. In helping the client to examine these, further progress may be made.

If this disclosure of sources of hostility is followed by a realistic look at the positive traits of the spouse, the client may be brought face to face with values which had formerly been masked or ignored. Understanding that characteristics and behaviors exhibited by the spouse are similar to those of the individual toward whom the early distaste arose, tends to produce a tremendously exaggerated response and gradually makes it possible to see the spouse more clearly. Unless the neurotic structure goes very deep, it is probable that the relationship can be much improved.

It is perhaps in order to mention something about helping the spouse of the one who is emotionally involved outside the marriage. Recriminations are of little value, generally doing more harm than good. Dealing directly with an OM or OW is seldom wise or helpful. I am not suggesting that the situation be ignored. Facing the facts and attempting to understand the dynamics that produced the situation is probably the most rewarding approach for the socalled "injured" party. Seeing to what extent self-improvement can be achieved and sincerely attempting to meet the reasonable demands of the spouse are sometimes sufficient to bring him or her back to a more sound relationship.

(Abstract of discussion in the 14th summer workshop on techniques of counseling, at the AIFR Aug. 3, 1961. Dr. Hungerford is assistant director of the department of education, AIFR.)

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Research Notes

COFFEE is one of the articles of food for which women most frequently take a dislike in pregnancy, according to a survey of 238 obstetrical patients in Cleveland, Ohio; of primiparae, 61% developed a dislike for the beverage, while 45% of the multiparae made the same report. All had previously been regularly coffee users.

DRUG ADDICTION, long an almost insoluble problem when it comes into a family, is being dealt with at the Shadel Hospital, Seattle, through administration of a coenzyme, Diphosphopyridine nucleotide. In more than 100 cases, withdrawal symptoms were prevented by this drug. Permanent "cure" would have to be brought about by counseling, but this is possible when the user can stop the use of the narcotic immediately and completely.—Paul O'Hollaren in *Western Journal of Surgery, Obstetrics, and Gynecology,* May-June, 1961.

MATERNAL REJECTION of a child is due most frequently to the mother's

unhappy adjustment to her own marriage, according to H. W. Newell in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*.

Other Books Received

CUSTOM: an essay on social codes, by Ferdinand Toennies. Pp. 151 (no index), price $4 from the Free Press, 640 Fifth ave., New York 19, N.Y., 1961.

HOW I WAS FREED FROM ALCOHOLIC SLAVERY, by Joseph Adkins jr. Pp. 61 (paper covers, no index), price $1 from the author, P.O. Box 24132, Los Angeles 24, Calif., 1961.

WHAT TEENAGERS OUGHT TO KNOW, by Florence Levinsohn in consultation with G. Lombard Kelly. Pp. 89 (paper covers, no index), price $1.50 from Budlong Press, 5428 N. Virginia ave., Chicago 25, Ills., 1961.—"This booklet is available only through professional sources."

Educational Notes

FLORIDA state law forbids state agencies from spending time counseling persons who are not voters—a restriction made because of the great number of tourists. The St. Petersburg Council of Churches has established a family counseling bureau to meet the needs of transients and others.

NEW SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAM, to treat the whole family as a unit, has been under way in a number of states since July 1. It is pushed by the Community Research Associates, Inc., with grants totaling $631,000 from private foundations. The project grows out of work done in St. Paul 12 or 15 years ago, where it was found that a "hard core" of families representing 6% of the population provided nearly all the load of all social agencies. The project proposes to make an attack on this core of families from every side. These programs which, when local contributions are added, will represent an outlay of more than $1,300,000, will be "family-centered" and will differ from traditional programs in that they will not deal with a segment of a family's problems, but with its total problem, aiming at rehabilitation of the entire family unit. Such an attack, it is claimed, brings better results but costs no more than traditional methods in which a number of agencies work separately, sometimes even at cross-purposes with each other.

IN COLUMBUS, OHIO, the Council of Protestant Churches has opened a Community Counseling Center on a part-time basis. This follows the pattern which Protestant churches have been adopting in many parts of North America during recent years.

SINCE CHURCH HYMNALS have offered few hymns dealing particularly with marriage and family life, an attempt was made last year to develop such material for Protestant worship, and 440 hymns were submitted in a competition. From these, 13 were selected as being satisfactory, and the words have been printed in a leaflet obtainable for 20c from the Hymn Society of America, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N.Y. Appropriate tunes for these hymns are suggested, and it is believed that they may be well used for family camps or conferences, family nights, at weddings, and on many other occasions.

Notes from the AIFR

CAN THIS MARRIAGE BE SAVED?, by Paul Popenoe and Dorothy Cameron

Disney, is being brought out in a Dutch edition. The book, published in the United States by Macmillan, contains 20 of the Institute's case histories which originally appeared in the Ladies Home Journal, together with a detailed discussion by Dr. Popenoe of the principles and practice of marriage counseling.

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Inexpensive Pamphlets

THE LAWYER SPEAKS ON STERILIZATION, by Harriet F. Pilpel. Free on request to Human Betterment Assn. of America, 105 W. 55th st., New York 19, N.Y.

ALCOHOLISM, Pp. 15, price 10c from Supt. of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. (Catalog No. FS 2.50:97/2.)

WE CAN END THE BATTLE OVER BIRTH CONTROL, by John Rock. Pp. 6, price 10c from Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 501 Madison ave., New York 22, N.Y.—Statement by a Roman Catholic physician.

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY AND RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE. Pp. 6, price 4c from Dept. of Family Life, Natl. Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N.Y.

YOUR PREMATURE BABY, Pp. 13, price 10c from Supt. of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. (Catalog No. FS 3.210:40.)

MARRIAGE ADJUSTMENT FORM, by E. W. Burgess, with counselor's guide. Specimen set 35c from Family Life Publications, Box 6725, College Station P.O., Durham, N.C.

HAZARD HUNTING, free from Natl. Safety Council, 425 N. Michigan ave., Chicago 11, Ills.—Guide to removing sources of danger in the home.

FREUD AND PSYCHOANALYSIS, by C. G. Jung. Bollingen Series XX, Pp. 376, price $5 from Pantheon Books, 333 Sixth ave., New York 14, N.Y., 1961.

This is Vol. 4 of the collected works of the Swiss psychiatrist, containing his writing on Freud from 1906 to 1916—it is therefore mainly of historical value. His first meeting with Freud was in 1907, but he had written on psychoanalysis several times before that. The split between Freud and Jung began in 1912. The handsome volume contains 16 publications, well translated by R. F. C. Hull.

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HOW YOU CAN CONQUER LONELINESS, by Andrew Kosten. Pp. 176, price $3.50 from Twayne Publishers, 31 Union Square West, New York), N.Y., 1961.

Dr. Kosten, minister of the First Presbyterian church of Ridgefield Park, N.J., is the author of half a dozen books of popular psychology and religion. He discusses ways of developing inner resources, overcoming aggressiveness and hostility, so that the reader can live a creative, conflict-free, and meaningful existence. Emphasis is naturally put on the religious outlook. Even those who never thought they were lonely will find something of interest and value in these pages.

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101 THINGS A BOY CAN DO AROUND THE HOUSE, by Arthur Symons. Pp. 128, price $2.50 from Sterling Pub. Co., 419 Fourth ave., New York 16, N.Y., 1961.

150 SEX QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, ed. by LeMon Clark and Isadore Rubin. Pp. 128, paper covers, price $1.75 from Health Publications, 154 W. 14th st., New York 11, N.Y., 1960.

PSYCHOANALYSIS OF THE PROSTITUTE, by Maryse Choisy. Pp. 138 (no index), price $4.75 from Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th st., New York 16, N.Y., 1961.

While this book does provide a very brief account of the psychoanalysis of two Parisian prostitutes, four-fifths of it is given over to other material: analysis of two pimps, a discussion of the mentality of the prostitute's customers, and a prolonged discussion of the relations between sex and religion from prehistoric times to the present. Dr. Choisy, a former president of the French Psychoanalytic Society and now editor of *Psyche,* international monthly journal of psychoanalysis, writes as do so many other psychoanalysts: interestingly, with unlimited dogmatic generalizations unsupported by any evidence, even though sometimes plausible. "All prostitutes are man-haters; all their patrons are woman-haters," and so on. Prostitution is only one item in a gereral state of mind, the author concludes; it is the world's whole spiritual atmosphere that must change. No moral endeavors will succeed. Books like this are thought provoking, but their glib statements are so often based on fragmentary facts or directly contradicted by overwhelming evidence, that they make little contribution to the solution of a great problem.

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THE RHYTHM WAY TO FAMILY HAPPINESS, by John P. Murphy and John D. Laux. Revised ed., Pp. 200 (no index,) price $3.50 from Hawthorn Books, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1960.

Detailed discussion of method of avoiding conception by observing the sterile period; first published in 1950.

CREATIVE MARRIAGE, by Albert Ellis and Robert A. Harper. Pp. 288, price $5 from Lyle Stuart, 225 Lafayette st., New York 12, N.Y., 1961.

Starting with a chapter titled "Modern marriage: hotbed of neurosis," two psychotherapists go on to examine the difficulties, and some of the advantages, of matrimony, and ways of dealing with both advantages and disadvantages. "Marriage, for the average male and female raised within our culture, seems," they say, "to be at least the lesser evil, if not necessarily the greatest good. This is particularly true for the American female." The authors emphasize that "the main concerns of marriage in our society—concerns that usually get little or no attention in the standard marriage text —are personal upsets, irrational prejudices, and the inability of individuals to communicate effectively with each other. These . . . tend to be particularly crucial in love-sex relationships. Hence, we devote the major portion of this book to the sex and love aspects of marriage." They urge the desirability of group counseling in preparation for marriage and insist that "instead of impeding problem-solving by blaming themselves and their partners, mates should accept responsibility for their own errors and imperfections, forgive their spouses' failings, and persist in working at difficulties instead of easily giving up."

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PAKISTAN, which now has 127 birth control centers, is planning to increase the number to 500 within the next five years. Population growth, which has now reached a total of 94,000,000, has alarmed the government.

NEW BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

TELEVISION IN THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN, by Wilbur Schramm, Jack Lyle, and Edwin B. Parker. Pp. 324, price $6 from Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 1961.

The average North American child spends one-sixth of his waking hours on television—exactly the same amount that he spends in school. Dr. Schramm, director of the Institute for Communications Research at Stanford, and his associates studied 6,000 children in 10 communities in the U.S. and Canada, and obtained further information from 2300 parents, teachers, and school officials. It is the best of the various studies that have been published on the subject in recent years, and should not be overlooked in the present fight on the part of so many elements in the population, against misuse of this medium. They point out, among other things ,that more than one-half of the programs presented from 4 to 9 p.m., (the so-called "children's hour") included violence,—murders, stranglings, suicides, etc.,—as an important part of their story. The conclusions which the authors draw, cautiously and with documentation, are too numerous and important to be boiled down to a few sentences. They make it clear that some children are adversely affected, some are not; but they think no one can believe that the medium in general gives children a fair and accurate picture of adult life. They call on all elements in the population to take intelligent and effective action to improve the situation. They are not impressed by the excuses which the industry gives for the present situation; they think the whole problem should be laid uncompromisingly at the door of the television industry and not be shrugged off by saying, "Why don't the parents control their children?" But the parents should do much more than they are now doing—along many lines.

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PEOPLE! Challenge to survival, by William Vogt. Pp. 257, price $4.50 from William Sloane Associates, 425 Park ave. South, New York 16, N.Y., 1960.

"Out of simple decency," says Dr. Vogt, mankind must radically change its ethics of parenthood; and he gives abundant reasons for his insistence. The author, who retired recently from the directorship of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, hits hard in many directions. Even those who do not agree with all of his points should certainly read his book. It presents the "population explosion" with a broader and richer factual background than do more technical and dryly statistical works.

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A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO EARNING A GOOD LIVING, by Elmer Winter. Pp. 402 (no index), price $4.95 from Simon & Schuster, 630 Fifth ave., New York 20, N.Y., 1961.

There are now more than 22 million women in the U.S. who are working at paid jobs. Nearly one-third of all married women draw pay checks. This book by the president of Manpower, Inc., which claims to have advised more than two million women on employment problems, is therefore

of direct and great importance to modern family living. He has good advice for the woman who can take only a part-time job (indeed, his own organization advertises itself as being the largest employer of part-time workers in the country); the woman with younger or with older children; and the woman who has "no training." Innumerable citations are accompanied by full names and addresses. Almost any woman, and almost any man who deals with women, especially if he counsels them, will find something valuable in this book.

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POPULATION PERSPECTIVES, by Philip M. Hauser. Pp. 183 (no index), price $3.50 from Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, N.J., 1961.

Understanding of the horrifying implications of the "population explosion," which has accompanied a declining death rate in most parts of the world since the beginning of this century, is probably rarer in the U.S. than in any other civilized country. In this compact book Dr. Hauser, a leading authority and director of the Population Research and Training Center of the University of Chicago, tries to help his fellow-citizens to understand the extent and nature of the problem and to be willing to "do something about it." The only thing that can be done is to bring about a reduced birth rate, since solution of the problem by killing off people is unthinkable. Wise action has been obscured by quibbling,—or violent controversy — over just what method should be used to reduce the birth rate. "With the wide variety of methods of birth control available to the American people, each of our diverse groups can find one that is morally acceptable" to it, he suggests; the important point is "recognition of the need for responsible parenthood in the interest of the individual, the family, and the world." Dr. Hauser's discussion is directed primarily to the question of quantity of population. There is an almost equally important problem of quality, also to be considered.

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RIMBLES, by Patricia Evans. Pp. 157, price $2.95 from Doubleday & Co., 575 Madison ave., New York 22, N.Y., 1961.

"A book of children's classic games, rhymes, songs, and sayings," which should provide them with new ideas but also has a historical and ethnological interest! Mrs. Evans has for years been collecting the play and language of children, and picked up most of the contents of this book in San Francisco, where there are children from all parts of the world.

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I NOSTRI BAMBINI, by Margherita Corna Pellegrini. Pp. 200 (paper covers, no index), from Istituto "La Casa," Via Mercalli 23, Milan, Italy.

A thoughtful book for parents or teachers, discussing the world of childhood, and the development of activities and interests among children.

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PROCEDURES AND PREPARATION FOR COUNSELING, by Wm. C. Cottle and N. M. Downie. Pp. 330, price $8 from Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1961.

This is not a handbook on counseling but a handbook on getting ready to counsel, mainly in the field of guidance. It will be of little value to marriage counselors—and incidentally, the word "marriage" does not even appear

in the index. It is evidently intended mainly for use as a college textbook, and the immense amount of material it offers will be useful for reference by many others, though recent research does not bear out the supposition that mastery of much of this material is a prerequisite to successful counseling. Among the items of interest is the finding that "Clergymen, counselors, clinical psychologists, and poets have typically feminine interests."

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FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAM PROFILES, by Norman W. Paget, Pp. 72 (paper covers, no index), price $2 from Kendal Pub. Co., San Bernardino, Calif., 1961.

Education for family life is expanding steadily in the U.S. and is being carried on by many different kinds of organizations. Mr. Paget (director of the Family Service Assn. of San Bernardino, Calif.) visited many parts of the country and corresponded with authorities elsewhere, to collect material for this book, which gives a sketch of what is being done through Family Service Agencies, public schools, Christian Associations, and through a dozen other sources. Altogether, 37 programs are outlined, to help others who want to promote such education in their own communities. For this purpose, it would have been a great help if mailing addresses had been provided for the various institutions concerned. Mr. Paget summarizes in 17 points the conditions under which family life education programs appear to be most effective. Since the subject is one of great importance, yet surprisingly little has been published to guide its development, this little book should be widely helpful.

A JEWISH CHILD IS BORN, by Nathan Gottlieb. Pp. 159, (no index) price $3.50 from Bloch Pub. Co., 31 W. 31st st., New York 1, N.Y., 1961.

While this book is addressed to Jewish parents, it should be a contribution to the cultural education of all others, for it presents in detail, and authoritatively, but simply, the requirements of the faith in regard to birth, redemption, circumcision, adoption, conversion, and related topics. "We determine the child's religion by his mother's religion. If the mother is Jewish (even though the father is not), the child is Jewish. The child of a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother is not considered Jewish until converted." The final third of the book is given over to a useful list of names of boys and girls, both Jewish and English, with their meanings. The child must have a Jewish name but frequently also has a non-Jewish name common in the country of his birth; or another Hebrew name translated into the local language. Dr. Gottlieb is a rabbi in Peterson, N.J.

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THE MAGNETIC PATTERNS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, by Wynn Baxter, with Dorothy Flower collaborator and editor. Pp. 163 (large, paper covers, no index), price $3.50 from Veritas Publications, 514 N. Lake ave., Pasadena, Calif., 1961.

A well-done, much-needed text and workbook in remedial reading for high school students. It covers basic phonetics, common prefixes and suffixes, and the most commonly troublesome "sight" words which do not conform to phonetic rules. Such a book is particularly desirable at the present time because many students now in

high school were just learning to read when the schools de-emphasized phonetics in favor of the "sight method" of reading. Consequently many of these students never did learn the technique of sounding out new and difficult words. They will certainly find more interest in filling this gap in their knowlledge when they can learn from a book rather than having to go back and work with grade school materials. There are soundly developed exercises and self-tests which put an emphasis on the student's own initiative, creativity, and effort—a must for the process of learning. Book II, which will emphasize the structure of our language and is intended to build vocabularly and improve spelling through the study of foreign roots, suffixes, and prefixes, is scheduled for publication next January.

Clarence H. Vetterli, M.A.

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EMOTIONAL MATURITY IN LOVE AND MARRIAGE, by Lucy Freeman and Harold Greenwald. Pp. 255, price $4.95 from Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33d st., New York 16, N.Y., 1961.

By the time he is half-way through this book, the average reader will probably have become a pessimist. It consists of an almost inexhaustible catalog of errors and evils, of misfortunes and misdemeanors. Any young person, in particular, might well draw the conclusion that it's hardly worth while to try to live, when the task is so difficult. Good pedagogy is not based on a wholly negative approach—and this volume comes close to that. Miss Freeman is a professional writer who has devoted herself largely to trying to popularize psychoanalysis; Dr. Greenwald is a psychoanalyst practicing in New York City.

MORALE SESSUALE E DIFFICOLTA ATTUALI, by J. Folliet and others. Pp. 490, price L.2000, from Istituto "La Casa," Via Mercalli 23, Milan, Italy.

A score of experts discuss in detail the practical problems involved in sexual morality today. The point of view is that of the Roman Catholic church. The book was originally published in French.

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MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR INCOME, by John L. Springer. Pp. 214, price $4.95 from Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1961.

How to earn, spend, and save money is the topic of this practical and usable book which goes into just the detail that readers want and need. It should be a substantial help to any family. The author is a professional writer.

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WOMAN'S LIFE IN COLONIAL DAYS, by Carl Holliday. Pp. 319, price $5 from Frederick Ungar Pub. Co., 131 E. 23d st., New York 10, N.Y., 1961.

First published in 1922 by a professor of English who died in 1936, this interesting and authoritative book is now reprinted in the American Classics series. It is based on letters and records of the period, which gives it more validity than most accounts—though the author, like many others, is wholly wrong in his supposition that women usually married early in life. His insistence on the independent spirit of Colonial women is a welcome antidote to the widespread myth that the wife of that period was merely a docile subordinate. This is a book that can be enjoyed either as sound history or good entertainment.

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